

## Othello Neighborhood Plan Update Workshop, March 14 2009

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Notes from Group 2, Shaping a Transit Friendly Community for the Neighborhood

**Please note, the following notes were typed up directly from the flip chart notes taken at the meeting.** City staff are currently working to identify consistent concerns and common themes, which will be posted separately.

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**Table 1**

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Session 1      9:30 – 10:30

**Question:** What unique characteristics contribute to the identity of your neighborhood center? As the community grows, what opportunities are there to build on that? *Follow up:* What things could change that would make it a better community for you?

- Low Density Housing
- A Neighborhood center = a business center
  - Close to residents so people don't have to drive to shop, meet friends, etc.
  - More residents will be living in business center
- A common gathering place
- Important to preserve single family housing, diversity and low income housing
- Incremental change is ok, wholesale is not
  - Safeway – we need to keep the grocery store – increased residential density will help support a grocery store
  - Keep Holly Park Clinic

**Question:** How would you like to meet your daily and weekly needs for goods and services today (walk, bike, bus, car)? How could you have more choices? *Follow up:* What would need to change for you to be able to do this. What do you want to keep in your neighborhood center, what would you like to bring into your neighborhood center?

- Small business assistance
- Parking for residents and shoppers
- Park & ride (hide) is an issue– people driving into neighborhood to park and ride transit using spot all day. Bad for local businesses and residents
- Revisit City Parking strategy
- Connect various pieces of neighborhood core for a little downtown
- Education facilities, especially ESL and technology
- Industrial Land at S Henderson/Norfolk represents an opportunity for green job creation – no air pollution
- Community meeting spaces, facility for youth and arts
- Shuttle to New Holly Library and walking paths connecting to neighborhood
- Bi-lingual school or programs in existing schools
- multi-lingual services
- Connection to Chief Sealth trail
- Move bi-lingual school from Queen Anne to Rainier
- Need towing company and parking enforcement

**Question:** In what ways could the arrival of new neighbors improve your community?

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- Customers for businesses
- Services that are tailored to kids at all ages – as they grow up
- Sports, arts and environment activities for youth
- Get high school students input in neighborhood plan
- Multi family housing needs to be well built for acoustic isolation  
cheaply built multi-family housing developments are “volcanoes of crime”
- Need City to demand well-managed multi family housing to prevent abuse and crime
- Constructive activities for youth
  - YMCA or similar resource center
- Coordinate buses with link Light Rail, synchronize lights
- Need sufficient infrastructure to accommodate height densities proposed around rail stations
- Soccer fields, community center for youth and outdoor chess boards
- SE corner of neighborhood lacking curbs and sidewalks.

Table 1, Session 2      10:30 – 11:30

**Question:** What unique characteristics contribute to the identity of your neighborhood center?  
As the community grows, what opportunities are there to build on that? *Follow up:* What things could change that would make it a better community for you?

- Resource of opportunity at Othello Town Center
  1. Diversity
  2. Convenient location
  3. Businesses/residents/parks
  4. Walkable to essential services
- Great framework exists – diverse businesses and cultures – retain this
- Preserve affordability of business and living spaces for rent and ownership
- New development needs to serve people in wider area- regulate parking to create visible and livable town center
- Need programmed activities for families – gathering place to accommodate great variety – green space equals town center
- Attract cornerstone businesses
- Neighborhood center is not at Station, but at Othello Park
- This is a residential urban village

**Question:** How would you like to meet your daily and weekly needs for goods and services today (walk, bike, bus, car)? How could you have more choices? *Follow up:* What would need to change for you to be able to do this. What do you want to keep in your neighborhood center, what would you like to bring into your neighborhood center?

- Cannot lose grocery store (Safeway)
- Five Essential Businesses/uses:
  1. Indoor/Out door Gathering
    - Main Street Feel
  1. Grocery

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2. Pharmacy
3. Bank
4. Hardware store
- Must attract shoppers from beyond the neighborhood
- Need multi-story buildings-not strip malls to get enough residents to support local businesses
- Connect businesses with surrounding community with services and jobs
- Businesses that appeal to greater diversity
- Help businesses attract new residents who are unfamiliar with local goods and services
- Affordable incubator Live/work buildings. Flexible “workspace” that support uniqueness of neighborhood.
- Crime affects many business
  1. Must address to create safe walkable neighborhood.
  2. Contributors to crime:
    - Speed of traffic
    - Lack of education
    - Lack of jobs and opportunity
- Hire locally-employ people from neighborhood
- Light Rail to airport and downtown will increase opportunity for people to commute to well paying jobs.
  1. Need employment education office to connect residents to jobs.
  2. Redevelopment equals some job loss
- Light Rail has caused net job loss
- Programming – Unique cultural mix – make community through range of activities, not just shopping – expand school diversity/cultural programming to larger community.
- SCC and businesses that employ youth to create structure, sense of civic responsibility.
  1. Apprenticeship programs.
- Jobs as crime prevention teaching – invest in beautification – upfront investment in the community

**Question:** What’s the theme, why do people want to come here?

- Economy will affect evolution of businesses and uses
- Entrepreneurship – Promote it!
  - Help people start micro – business – self employ
  - Youth not just interested in jobs - they also want to start businesses
- Community – based economic development assistance
- Self funded micro-lending organization
- Plug people into ongoing preventative health care: medical/dental services in urban villages
- Need money for schools – classes greater than twenty.
  - Teacher and teacher’s aide
  - Build community through schools

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Notes from Group 2, Shaping a Transit Friendly Community for the Neighborhood

Table 1, Session 3      11:30 – 12:30

**Question:** What unique characteristics contribute to the identity of your neighborhood center? As the community grows, what opportunities are there to build on that? *Follow up:* What things could change that would make it a better community for you?

- 3% of population are Native Americans – they do not feel welcome. They need some visible mark, place, gathering place.
- Light Rail is causing loss of low income housing
- Neighborhood Center – Van Asselt Playground
- Near Neighborhood housing, Library, SCC facilities at Holly Park
- Neighborhood Center at Othello
- Businesses – Needs better Lighting, cleaning and security
- Neighborhood Center at Filipino Center
- Lots of space for activities and resources
- No transportation East to West from Beacon Hill to Holly Park Clinic
- Edmonds Street Station is closest to Col. City Clinic where Native Americans go for services.
- Need for a Native American Community Center

**Question:** In what ways could the arrival of new neighbors improve your community?

- New residents bring diversity, sharing of culture and traditions
- New residents will help keep schools open – it would be great to have international magnet school
- New residents will bring more businesses, jobs, schools, services,
- Need to promote a local shopping and gathering place like Crossroads Mall which would have:
  - Activities like outdoor chess
  - A place to hang out
  - Small post office
  - Other small services, development under single ownership
- Indoor place to hang out around vicinity of existing Safeway – with services and small businesses
- Need a post office nearest Alaska and Rainer (walkable distance)
- Seniors tend to drive, use Access senior transportation (though limiting)
- Not as many stops on Link as there are Metro bus stops – will light rail actually decrease mobility in and around the neighborhood?
- Elderly cannot walk so far – buses stops needed more frequently
- Transfer from Light Rail Link to Bus – how will that work?
- More goods and services in neighborhood center would draw Holly Park residents down, instead of up to buses on Beacon (#7 & #42)
- Need movie house, post office, spa
- Need new bus route connecting neighborhoods with urban village
- Need ice cream shop, fitness club swimming pool, more public daycare and after school programs for older kids and especially pre – school tutoring

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### Notes from Group 2, Shaping a Transit Friendly Community for the Neighborhood

- Community center meeting space (affordable) Disneyland (!)
- Security and public safety
  - Lighting, cleaning, eyes on street
  - More police patrols
  - Seniors feel vulnerable
- Small businesses need affordable rents
- What are plans for vacant lots? How can existing residents influence future uses of vacant lots?
- Narrow roads in Holly Park, with parking on both sides with two way traffic slows traffic down but makes circulation difficult
- Senior Center

### Table 2

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**Questions:** What unique characteristics contribute to the identity of your neighborhood center? As the community grows, what opportunities are there to build on that? *Follow up:* What things could change that would make it a better community for you?

In what ways could the arrival of new neighbors improve your community?

How would you like to meet your daily and weekly needs for goods and services today (walk, bike, bus, car)? How could you have more choices? *Follow up:* What would need to change for you to be able to do this?

What services are important to you as your neighborhood grows? *Follow up:* What opportunity does this growth provide?

- Keep express busses on Rainier
- Local street patterns sometimes cut off by routes to cross MLK ("right turn only very limiting" – 44<sup>th</sup> Ave S and S Holly St)
- Transit good for going downtown (parking expensive)
- Light Rail Transit?? Cost? Frequency?
- RPZ planned – Sound Transit to pay?
- Easy drop-off at stations is necessary
- Poor parking at King Plaza – many people parking in garage now – did not happen before, more people driving?
- Include local and low income people in development of area jobs, planning
- Fear of accelerating gentrification
- Gang violence a concern
- Diversity is an asset
- Want a good school in every area
- Need affordable housing to keep people in neighborhood
- Many small businesses - people live near work (need to maintain and preserve)

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- Communication from City is Poor
- Notification about this meeting poor – need to advertise in local newspapers
- Cap rents for small businesses? To allow them to stay in business
- Harder for pedestrians to cross MLK with rail tracks – need signal timing to be looked at
- Create awareness of businesses
- Driving on MLK now better than Rainier but left turns are slow
- New people displace current residents - African/American community now gone from neighborhood
- More people/more businesses good for walking and community – more eyes on the street
- With new business, where does existing business go?
- Need moving assistance for businesses that have to move
- Getting around – transit ok - fare structure for short rides?
- Mix of methods used by residents to get around their neighborhood: walk, bike, drive, bus
- Need wider sidewalks
- Better crosswalk safety
- More neighborhood buses
- Multiple language announcements

### Services:

- Large grocery store
- Need more services on South Beacon Ave
- Mini malls near each station
- More clothing stores, drug store
- Green industries, bicycle shop
- Maintain, improve parks/used a lot, add more (soccer, track, bocce, not just basketball) – need better park programming
- Green up spaces near Light Rail Transit
- Senior citizen spaces
- Less expensive markets
- Develop empty spaces
- Current planned projects good (mix apartments, retail and working)
- Walk/Bike more
- Flatten hills, no parking on sidewalks
- Need more small parks for kids
- Parking for home services lacking
- More culturally appropriate activities at parks
- Ped bridges over MLK near community activities
- Looking forward to Light Rail Transit – Concerned about parking
- Alternate ideas to be presented in May
- Local communities of people have professional skills – not being used
- Will plan create jobs? More jobs equal more buying equals better business

Re-Name Neighborhood: OTHELLO

- Center: MLK/Othello
  - Need grocery store (poor Safeway)
  - Improve Park
  - Safety, Welcoming, lighting signage, pedestrian routes
- Hard to cross MLK on foot – light too short
- Low Income Housing needed – public/private financing?
- Become “neighbor friendly” as people immigrate into neighborhood
- Immigrant concern about places to worship not always respected – need a mosque for Muslims
- Need more places for youth to gather
- Youth need a safer environment – Adults need to make it happen
  - Parks: develop what we have. Action, not more planning
  - Sports areas run down. Need maintenance, lights and grandstands.
  - Seattle Public Schools not part of this process. Lack of programming at school fields need to encourage people to join in
  - Better access to open spaces
  - Neighborhood proposals being evaluated
  - East Africans need/want a bi-lingual school